

## Rabin 'hopeful' of peace with Syria

BONN (R) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was quoted Sunday as saying he was optimistic his country could find peace with Syria. "The Syrians understand that Israel is ready to withdraw from the Golan Heights," he told Germany's *Die Welt* newspaper in an interview released ahead of publication Monday. "I also believe they are thinking in Damascus about how much sense it would really make for Syria to fall back into a war situation," he said. Mr. Rabin said Israel was ready to quit the Golan Heights if Damascus agreed to a bilateral peace treaty and to normalize relations with the Jewish state. He said Israel hoped to conclude a peace treaty with at least one Arab neighbour this year or at the latest next year. "If we don't this would result in frustration on all sides and lead to heightened tension in the region," he said. Mr. Rabin said he did not believe Israel's expulsion of 415 Palestinians to Lebanon would undermine chances of negotiations with Syria.

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## Accord signed over Jordan-Gulf Bank

AMMAN (Petra) — A memorandum of understanding was signed Sunday between the Jordan Gulf Bank and a group of Jordanian and Arab investors. The memo aims to enable the bank, which has recently merged with the Al Mashreq Bank/Jordan, to continue its banking operations as usual. The memo was signed after consultations between the bank and the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) in accordance with decisions by the Economic Stability Committee (ESC) on Al Mashreq and Jordan Gulf Banks. The decisions by the ESC aimed to restructure the bank's capital by creating a new capital of JD 20 million and to preserve the rights of the bank's clients.

## Bomb threat on Air India plane

ANAKA (AP) — An Air India passenger jet made a brief emergency stop here Sunday after an anonymous caller said there was a bomb aboard, news agencies reported. Security forces searched the plane, travelling from New Delhi to London, during the five-hour stop but no bomb was found, an airport official said. Reports said an anonymous caller telephoned Air India's office in New Delhi and said there was a bomb aboard the flight. The information was radioed on to the pilot. Sonia Gandhi, widow of the late Indian Prime Rajiv Gandhi, was reportedly to be among the passengers. Anofa said. New Delhi airport officials said they could not confirm the report.

## Egypt lawyers, engineers strike

CAIRO (R) — Lawyers and engineers were on strike in Egypt Sunday in protest at a law likely to stop Muslim fundamentalists controlling their professional associations. The lawyers stayed out of court all day and the engineers stopped work for a few hours. Their associations said they would organise sit-ins and more strikes unless the law is repealed. The law, passed by parliament Wednesday and approved by President Hosni Mubarak the next day, will make it hard for fundamentalists to retain control of the associations. Under the law, elections inside the associations are invalid unless at least 50 per cent of the members vote. In many cases the fundamentalists have won control on very low turnout.

## Israel elects new chief rabbis

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel got new chief rabbis Sunday after an election campaign dubbed the dirtiest in Israeli history, with accusations of womanizing, bribery and electronic snooping. A 150-member conclave of religious and lay leaders met and elected Yisrael Lau and Eliyahu Bakshi Doron as chief rabbis of the European-descended Ashkenazi and Middle East-descended Sephardi communities of Israel. They succeed rabbis Avraham Shapira and Mordechai Eliahu.

## Gadhafi warns of plot against popular rule

CAIRO (AP) — Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi has expressed fears of a conspiracy against popular rule in Libya and warned that some people are trying to take power away from the people. Colonel Gadhafi, speaking by telephone to a seminar on communism shown on Libyan television Saturday night, spoke of pressure being applied to merge local districts. He said he fears that there might be a conspiracy against popular authority and "the participation of the Libyan citizens in deciding his destiny in everything."

## Budget

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## Christopher vows U.S. will be 'honest broker'

Syria tables 'proposals' to end stalemate; U.S. secretary of state arrives in S. Arabia

### Palestinians say judicial review no solution

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said Sunday that Arab leaders were willing to resume peace talks with Israel and pledged that the United States would step in as an "honest broker" to revive the stalled negotiations.

But he told a news conference after 3½ hours of talks with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad that he did not believe that the Clinton administration should put pressure on any of the parties to speed up the U.S.-sponsored process.

Mr. Christopher did not elaborate, but he apparently was ruling out that the United States would lean on Israel, as the Arabs demand, to bring home nearly 400 expelled Palestinians.

The mass expulsion Dec. 17 has incensed the Arabs and threatened the tortuous peace process launched in Madrid in October 1991. The Palestinians say they will boycott the negotiations until all the expellees have

been allowed home.

Syria has said it sees no point in resuming the talks broken off in mid-December until Israel backs down and takes the men back.

Mr. Christopher, who later arrived in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, said that his talks with Mr. Assad, a pivotal player in the peace process, were wide-ranging with a "candid and useful exchange of

views."

He said that Syria had "played, and will continue to play" a central role in the negotiations "and must do so if they are to be successful."

Mr. Christopher said that he and Mr. Assad "spoke of the desirability of an early resumption... and the need for progress... frankly, I've been encouraged by our substantive discussions."

Mr. Christopher told the joint news conference with Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharai "President Assad emphasised his commitment to the process of direct negotiations that were laun-

(Continued on page 5)

## Palestinian poll says no peace talks before exiles return home

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Four out of five Palestinians think their leaders should boycott Middle East peace talks until some 400 Palestinians Israel expelled to Lebanon return; an opinion poll

## Exiles ready for deal based on Israeli pledge

MAR AL ZOHOUR, Lebanon (Agencies) — Palestinian exiles stranded in South Lebanon said Sunday they would accept a timetable for their repatriation if Israel made an internationally guaranteed pledge renouncing expulsion.

The announcement by exiles spokesman Aziz Dweik suggested the nearly 400 exiles had softened their rigid rejection of a phased return. The development came on the third day of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's current Middle East tour (see separate story).

"We will accept a timetable for our return only if Israel declares with international guarantees that it will not deport any Palestinian anymore," Dr. Dweik said.

"Otherwise, it's all or none," added Dr. Dweik, a geography professor. The exiles are living in a makeshift camp between Lebanese and Israeli army lines.

His statements suggested the exiles might accept a phased return over a period of time, as long as they got the no-expulsion pledge from Israel. Until now, they have been insisting that they all return together, and immediately.

(Continued on page 5)

## Amato reshuffles cabinet after bribery scandals

ROME (R) — Italian Prime Minister Giuliano Amato reshuffled three key cabinet posts Sunday as he struggled to keep his government afloat after a series of bribery scandals that has devastated the Italian political class.

The reshuffle, after four hours of argument among ministers on how to prop up the eight-month-old government, was a rapid response to the turmoil created by the resignation of the finance and health ministers last Friday.

Socialist Franco Reviglio, previously budget minister, was made finance minister, ministers said as they left a special cabinet meeting. Veteran Christian Democrat Beniamino Andreatta will take over Mr. Reviglio's old job.

Liberal Raffaele Costa was promoted to the health ministry. He had previously been a minister without portfolio responsible for regional affairs.

Asked who represented Palestinians 58.1 per cent said the PLO, 12.4 per cent the Islamic movement and 26.1 per cent said true representation could only be achieved through direct elections.

Mr. Rabah said his poll, conducted throughout the occupied territories from Feb. 18 to 20, had a margin of error of five to six per cent.

Friday's resignation of Finance Minister Giovanni Goria and Health Minister Francesco de Lorenzo, both tainted by corruption scandals, hammered the lira on the foreign exchanges.

The prime minister failed to broaden his four-party alliance as both the former communists of the Democratic Party of the Left (PDS) and the small Republican Party refused overtures to join an administration headed by him.

The government is Italy's 51st since World War II and, like most before it, is based on an uneasy alliance between Christians and Socialists.

It has a wafer-thin majority of just 16 in the 630-seat lower house but Mr. Amato is expected to call a fresh confidence vote in the next few days to prove he still has parliamentary approval.

Mr. Amato's Socialist Party is the focus of an inquiry into the corrupt awarding of public works contracts centered on Milan.

The scandal has forced former Prime Minister and strong Amato backer Bettino Craxi to resign as head of the party.

Mr. Amato has kept his word about having the government back to full strength before the opening of financial markets Monday.

Separate scandals brought down Mr. Goria and Mr. de Lorenzo.

## Prince Abdullah to wed Rania Yassin

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Royal Court Sunday announced the engagement of His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah, the eldest son of His Majesty King Hussein, to Rania Faisal Yassin.

The Royal Court said the engagement was attended by King Hussein, His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad, the personal representative of King Hussein and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan as well as Their Royal Highnesses Prince Faisal, Prince Hamzeh, Prince Hashem and



His Majesty King Hussein with His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah and his fiancée Rania Faisal Yassin who got engaged Sunday (photo by Medios)

"As the Royal Court announces the happy news, it is honoured to send to His Majesty King Hussein and

the Hashemite family and the Jordanian family its warmest congratulations," the statement said.

## Jordan made stands clear on peace and Iraq to Christopher — Abu Jaber Foreign minister to brief House in secret session

By Ayman Al Safadi  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Wednesday House of Parliament will Wednesday hold a secret session to discuss the outcome of talks Jordanian officials held with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who is currently touring the region in a bid to reactive the stalled Arab-Israeli peace process.

The House decided to debate the matter in a closed-door session at the request of Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber, who Sunday briefed deputies on the visit.

Dr. Abu Jaber told the House that His Majesty King Hussein pointed out in his talks with Mr. Christopher that the question of the Palestinian expellees was a major obstacle to the peace process, which has to be solved through allowing all expellees to return to the occupied territories.

Asked whether their hopes had been dashed by the emphasis given to the importance of the peace talks during Mr. Christopher's tour, Dr. Rantisi said the problems were separate.

"Our spirits are high and this doesn't cause us to feel more down. Our stand is not linked to the Arab states. If the Arabs change their position, our will not change. Our case will only die with the death of Israel's decision to deport us," he said.

Dr. Rantisi reiterated a call for all Arabs to quit the U.S.-sponsored peace talks with Israel.

"The talks are not to the benefit of the Palestinian people.

(Continued on page 5)

## U.N. team to pay surprise visit to Iraq

MANAMA — The United Nations Sunday announced a surprise weapons inspection visit to Iraq, and said experts would fly in at dawn Monday.

"We have a certain operation ahead of us and we would like to disclose it to the press," team leader Nikita Smidovich told reporters Sunday night, nine hours before a U.N. plane was to head to Baghdad.

Mr. Smidovich would not elaborate on the objectives of the visit or why it was mounted so suddenly.

Another set of U.N. inspectors already in Baghdad has extended its stay beyond its originally planned departure date of Sunday, after telling the press that it had gathered fresh information on Iraq's ballistic missile programme.

The leader of that team, Frenchman Patrice Palanque, said it would depart Monday after it took a day off at the Iraq's request Friday.

But U.N. officials in Bahrain, the regional field headquarters for the U.N. special commission entrusted with destroying Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, said that team was now likely to stay at least until Tuesday.

Mr. Palanque said that the team visited two sites that had not been declared by Iraq in its supposedly comprehensive list of such weapons and facilities.

The tour was marked last week by statements from U.N. headquarters in New York that the special commission insists on its right to fly helicopters over Baghdad on inspection missions.

The teams have thus far refrained from such flights out of respect for Iraqi sensitivity over them. Iraqi officials say privately that any aircraft over Baghdad represents a threat to President Saddam Hussein.

The scandal has forced former Prime Minister and strong Amato backer Bettino Craxi to resign as head of the party.

It also cost Socialist Justice Minister Claudio Martelli his job less than two weeks ago.

Separate scandals brought down Mr. Goria and Mr. de Lorenzo.

The victim of the attack was treated and released from hospital Sunday. Sources said the wound was not serious.

The assailant, said to be wearing a headdress hiding his facial features, fled the scene and police were searching for him late into the night.

"Policemen are everywhere."

## Fragile Kabul truce collapses

KABUL (AP) — A fragile truce between the struggling Islamic government and fundamentalist rebels collapsed early Sunday, heightening fears of a renewed battle for the capital.

Government artillery slammed into the western suburbs controlled by Hezb-e-Wahdat, an Iranian-supported coalition of eight small, predominantly Shiite factions.

The fighting, which broke a week-long lull, apparently erupted when Hezb-e-Wahdat tried to overrun government posts, military sources said. There were no immediate reports of casualties.

Many of the neighbourhoods under fire were destroyed and deserted months ago (see page 2).

On the city's southern edge, weary government forces battled fighters of Hezb-e-Islami, an ally of Hezb-e-Wahdat. There were no signs of casualties, although the Defence Ministry said one of its troops was injured.

The Muslim rebels who ousted Afghan communist regime in April have been fighting among themselves since, killing and wounding thousands of people — mostly civilians — and destroying

much of the capital.

The combatants had agreed to a temporary ceasefire last Sunday to give mediators a chance to broker peace.

Afghanistan's most powerful warlord, General Abdul Rashid Dostum, urged the warring sides Sunday to allow him to negotiate a lasting ceasefire.

He also called on Pakistan, Iran and Saudi Arabia — who backed the rebels in their 14-year struggle against the communists — to accept the truce and stop providing weapons, money and encouragement to the warring factions.

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Afghan officials said Saturday that peace talks would open Sunday when a government delegation led by Economic Planning Minister Ali Al Haji Mohammad arrived from Khartoum.

But Colonel Garang, leader of the main faction in the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), told Reuters in an interview in Kampala late Saturday, "We did not come to Kampala for peace talks since there is already an ongoing peace process. We have come to receive a

(Continued on page 5)

## Police mount massive manhunt after attack at Jabal Amman shop

AMMAN (J.T.) — Police mounted a massive manhunt late Sunday following the stabbing attack on the owner of a supermarket in the First Circle area of Jabal Amman.

According to sources, police were called to the area after eyewitnesses phoned them to report a "fight" in the supermarket during which the owner of the shop was stabbed in the neck with a knife.

The victim of the attack was treated and released from hospital Sunday. Sources said the wound was not serious.

The assailant, said to be wearing a headdress hiding his facial features, fled the scene and police were searching for him late into the night.

In all previous attacks attributed to Abu Shakoush, the weapon used in the assaults was a blunt instrument, most probably a medium-sized hammer.

"Policemen are everywhere."

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# Middle East News

## Iraq says it will execute traders of banned goods

By Dilip Ganguly

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Iraq said Sunday it would execute traders dealing in banned foreign consumer goods, a trade that is undermining the sanctions-battered economy.

"The Revolutionary Command Council has issued a decree which stipulates that those traders who store or sell commodities that are banned... shall be punished with the death penalty or life imprisonment," said the state-run newspaper Al Thawra.

In August, the government banned trade in luxury goods and compelled traders and retailers to clear them from their shops by Dec. 10.

The idea behind the government decision was to push traders into using their hard currency holdings for importing much-needed food, instead of luxury goods.

The traders did clear their stores, but by shifting the goods to homes and warehouses. The imports of luxury goods and consumer goods continued and they are sold on the black market.

Sunday's decision is seen as an extreme measure to halt trading in luxury goods and save the Iraqi dinar from further decline.

The dollar traded at about 35 dinars Sunday in Baghdad's foreign exchange black market, where salesmen stand beside roads with huge plastic bags containing dinars. They flash a money symbol by using sign language at passing vehicles. Deals are made quickly.

The currency trading has the

## Algeria buys Egypt's APCs against Islamists

ALGIERS (R) — Algeria has ordered hundred of armoured personnel carriers (APCs) from Egypt to strengthen its fight against Muslim fundamentalists, diplomats said Sunday.

"They are armoured troop transporters ideally suitable for town work," one European diplomat said, adding that the order was for a minimum of 200 vehicles.

Another diplomat put the figure at 300 Fahds cars. He said 50 had been delivered while the two countries were trying to resolve the question of payment for the rest. No figures for the cost of the deal were available.

"They are state-of-the-art anti-terrorist vehicles. Fifty have arrived out of a total order of 300," he said.

Both countries are fighting fundamentalists who have killed more than 260 members of the security forces in Algeria in the past 12 months and cost Egypt some \$700 million in lost tourist trade after attacks on foreigners.

"I'm not surprised they are cooperating on this deal. They are both fighting the same enemy," one diplomat said.

The four-wheel drive Fahd APC has two machineguns and armour-plating supplied by France's Creusot-Loire company. Based on a Daimler-Benz chassis and designed by Germany's Thyssen-Henschel, the APC can carry 12 troops or be adapted to other military uses.

Algeria's current fleet of APCs consists mainly of Russian BTR60s, a foreign military source said.

The vehicles are widely used to beef up road blocks by troops or para-military gendarmerie, acting fundamentalists.

"They don't need any more APCs, other than to strengthen general anti-terrorist work, although they may be needed to replace some of the older BTRs,"

government's covert support as this is one of the ways the state encourages trading in dollar holdings of Iraqis.

The official rate is \$3.20 to one dinar.

The prices of essential flour and rice have risen up to 50 per cent since December.

President Saddam Hussein had ordered an increase of about 40 per cent in salaries of civil servants and military personnel in December. But the rise did little to alleviate the suffering of the people as most of it was eaten up by the rising prices.

With its oil exports banned or frozen or seized, Iraq is finding it more and more difficult to redress its economy, which has been under U.N.-imposed sanctions since Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait.

Earlier government efforts to support the dinar and reduce prices have not had much success. Last July the government executed 42 traders accused of illegally hoarding and profiteering.

A rationing system, which provides almost two thirds of the food needs, has so far kept the Iraqis at subsistence level.

In January the government ordered an increase in the monthly quota distributed through the ration system.

The increases include: flour from eight kilogrammes per person per month to nine kilogrammes, sugar from 1.25 kilogramme to 1.50 kilogramme, and rice from 1.50 kilogramme to 1.75 kilogramme.

## Rushdie appeals for meeting with Major

LONDON (R) — British author Salman Rushdie, sentenced to death by Iran for blasphemy, appealed publicly Sunday for a meeting with Prime Minister John Major.

Mr. Rushdie told British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) Television he wanted an on-the-record meeting, which would be a "symbolic gesture but an important one."

The aim would be to show Iran that Britain was serious in opposing the death sentence on Mr. Rushdie which Iranian leaders reconfirmed a week ago on the fourth anniversary of its imposition.

"Nothing will do that except to the government standing next to me and saying, 'We will protect our citizens,'" Mr. Rushdie said.

The government has taken an increasingly high-profile stance against the death order in recent weeks.

Last Thursday Foreign Office Minister Douglas Hogg held a meeting with Iran's top diplomat in London at which he condemned the order as a violation of international law and an incitement to murder.

The death edict was imposed on Mr. Rushdie, 45, by the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini for allegedly blaspheming against Islam in his novel "The Satanic Verses." Iranian spokesmen have subsequently offered a bounty of more than \$1 million.

Mr. Rushdie is under 24-hour police protection but has in the past year made increasingly frequent surprise public appearances and trips abroad in a quest for international support.

He dismissed statements by Iranian leaders that the death order could never be lifted because that could only be done by the person who imposed it — Ayatollah Khomeini — and he is dead.

He noted that Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani had said the edict could be lifted for extreme national need. "This is not a technical or theological problem; it's a problem of political will," Mr. Rushdie said.

Mr. Rafsanjani has written to European states condemning their policy on the Rushdie affair and restating that the death order on the Indian-born author will not be lifted, IRNA agency said Saturday.

The agency said President Rafsanjani's letter to the 12 European Community (EC) members also formed the basis of Thursday's meeting between Mr. Hogg and Iran's senior diplomat in London.

The seven-page letter accusing EC states of "double standards" in their condemnation of the Iranian death order could deal a blow to Iran's efforts to win Western investment.

Mr. Rafsanjani stressed in the letter that the death edict had been confirmed by different Muslim sects and the 51-member Organisation of the Islamic Conference. He "categorically stated there was no way in which it could be lifted," IRNA said.

IRNA said Mr. Hogg had also assured Iranian Charge d'Affaires Gholamreza Ansari that Mr. Major and his foreign secretary would give "a comprehensive, serious and indepth reply" to Mr. Rafsanjani's letter.

The Iranian president also dismissed what Tehran calls false Western claims that it was leading an arms race in the region.

"Despite all the false propaganda about (Iran), its defense budget was by far the lowest in the region, as is borne out by military sales analysts," IRNA reported.

Mr. Rafsanjani also stressed that Iran's human rights record was the best in the Middle East.

Head of State Ali Kafi said last Thursday the leadership was determined to rid the country of the "cancer of terrorism" which he said was part of a "minutely executed plan."

He cited an assassination attempt on Gen. Nezzar earlier this month as proof of the "implications of this criminal plan."

## Aideed aide sees imperial designs in Somalia

MOGADISHU (R) — An aide to one of Somalia's most powerful warlords said Sunday that U.S. and other foreign troops had adopted a colonial-style policy of divide-and-rule because they had long-term imperial designs on the country.

Issa Mohammad Siad, an official in the political faction led by General Mohammad Farah Aideed, said the multinational force had also failed to feed the people and was not even-handed in the way it had set about disarming the Somali militias.

U.S. officials said the outburst by Mr. Siad indicated support for Gen. Aideed's faction was waning now that the multinational force has ordered militiamen into assembly points as part of the disarmament process.

"Oil and gas have not been found in Somalia but geological data indicate that deposits should exist."

"Without the U.N. forces, we are finding that political support is shifting away from them. Our military forces are in camps and cannot go out because helicopters of UNITAF (the U.N. force) are moving over them day and night," Mr. Siad said.

head of foreign relations in Gen. Aideed's wing of the United Somali Congress (USC), told Reuters in an interview.

Asked why anyone would want to take over an impoverished country such as Somalia, he said: "Somalia has huge reserves of both oil and gas and there are lots of people who would want to control these."

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"Bandits like Morgan are violating the ceasefire, gaining more territory but nothing is done to them. Our military forces are in camps and cannot go out because helicopters of UNITAF (the U.N. force) are moving over them day and night," Mr. Siad said.

Mr. Siad, a former linguistics professor, specifically accused the foreign troops of favouring the militia loyal to Mohammad Said Hersi, known as Gen. Morgan, the son-in-law of ousted dictator Mohammad Siad Barre. Gen. Morgan is active in southern Somalia.

Omarr Jess, Gen. Aideed's ally and active the militia leader in the southern port of Kismayu, made the same complaint last week.

"It is not necessary to spend this money to send this UNITAF contingent. We already have enough guns and arms in the country and it is not necessary to add to them."

"I am sure that most of the bandits... would throw away their guns if they could be assured of one or two meals a day."

"UNITAF is also active mostly in areas controlled by my party. Why not the whole country? It is UNITAF's responsibility to disarm Morgan's bandits."

Mr. Siad also complained the task force had brought some guns that food to Somalia and that thousands of people who were still dying in the camps.

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## Accused Egyptians say they killed Swedish woman

CAIRO (Agencies) — Three men arrested in connection with the murder of a U.S. tourist confessed to killing a Swedish woman diving instructor, security sources said Sunday.

They said the men arrested last week confessed during interrogation about the murder of the American woman. The Swede was killed six months ago and her body dumped in the Red Sea at the resort of Sharm Al Sheikh.

The trio collected the Swede on her arrival at Cairo Airport to take her to a Red Sea Hotel. They stole her scuba equipment and money and then strangled her.

Her body was found on Sept. 10. Her diving equipment was found among the suspects' possessions, the sources added.

The three men were named as Jamal Abdallah, a former employee of a tourist company at Cairo Airport, Sayed Togham, a driver, and Yousef Mohammad Yusef, unemployed.

They used the same tactic with the 65-year-old American from Miami. They picked her up at the airport and killed her on the way to an hotel, the sources said. Her body was found on Feb. 6 on a road between Cairo and Suez.

The U.S. and Swedish embassies have declined to identify the women or give further details.

Police officials said two masked and armed gunmen stormed Bedouin jewellery shop in Mataria district while two others stood guard outside, shooting their machine-guns indiscriminately. The lone worker in the shop, Magdi Abd Al Khalef, locked himself in a small bathroom while the two men seized the gold and ransacked the shop.

One man was wounded in the attack.

Members of Egypt's Coptic Christian community have been targets of Muslim extremists who seek to overthrow the government and establish an Islamic theocracy.

More than 80 people have been killed in extremist violence which started a year ago. The new targets are foreign tourists.

Several years ago, the militants started robbing Christian-owned jewellery shops to finance their operations.

Daily Al Ahram newspaper reported that a force of 200 police officers are participating in the search for the four gunmen.

Residents from the Pashtun community and their Shi'ite neighbours trade charges of kidnappings, rapes and atrocities while their fighters bombard each other with rockets and artillery.

They are the victims of

rival ambitions among the Mujahedeen who fought for 14 years to free them from communist rule.

The alliances between the three Mujahedeen parties unravelled after they took over from the former communist government last April and centuries-old hatreds and prejudices resurfaced.

The fugitives, mainly cold and frightened women and children, crouch on the bare floor of the Timony Mosque in a northeastern suburb of Kabul far from the southwestern districts where government troops fight a former ally, the Shi'ite Hezb-e-Wahdat party.

"Four rockets hit our house and my 13-year-old son was killed," said one middle-aged woman, Rubarbah, as she wept quietly in a corner of the Timony Mosque.

"We escaped and carried our injured and our bodies here," she said. She arrived two days earlier. Beside her on the stone floor lay a nephew, his head and one eye in bandages.

One Pashtun reporter described how she was snatched off the street by a group of Hezb-e-Wahdat fighters who accused her of being a government spy and threatened to rape her and send her back to her people so that she could tell them of the fate in store for Pashtuns.

"A rocket fell nearby before they could do anything and I ran away," she said. She escaped, dodging hail of bullets from her captors.

Fugitives fleeing the battlefield in the western suburbs tell of increasing incidence of rape and summary executions by fighters of all sides. The ferocity of the fighting prevents verification by independent observers.

However, the ragged women and children sobbing in the Timony Mosque are testimony to the mounting lawlessness and violence among guerrillas who entered the city 10 months ago as liberators on a wave of Islamic fervour.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) says hundreds of civilians have been killed and 5,000 injured in the latest fierce exchanges of rocket and artillery fire. The exact death toll

## Kabulis live in terror 10 months after 'liberation'

By Suzy Price

Reuter

KABUL — Several hundred people, many dazed and sobbing, huddle in a mosque in a suburb of the Afghan capital, fugitives from months of bloody battles.

They are the victims of

rival ambitions among the

Mujahedeen who fought for

14 years to free them from

communist rule.

"We are just ordinary people, we have no links with any group," said Mohammad Abdu. "Before there were no differences between Pashtun and Hazara, we were all brothers but now this fighting has ruined everything."

Much of the fighting of the last four weeks has been concentrated in the western suburbs around the headquarters of the Hezb-e-Wahdat at Kabul's Social Sciences Institute.

The Shi'ite are demanding a

larger share in the government of Afghanistan, traditionally dominated by majority Pashtuns.

Troops loyal to the Islamic government of President Burhanuddin Rabbani and his newest ally Abdurrashid Sayyaf, fundamentalist Sunni Muslim leader of the Ittehad-e-Islami party have made advances against several of the Shi'ite bases.

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Troops loyal to the Islamic

government of President Burhanuddin Rabbani and his newest ally Abdurrashid Sayyaf, fundamentalist Sunni Muslim leader of the Ittehad-e-Islami party have made advances against several of the Shi'ite bases.

Residents from the Pashtun community and their Shi'ite neighbours trade

charges of kidnappings, rapes and

## King meets with visiting Bulgarian deputy premier

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Sunday received at the Royal Court Bulgarian Deputy Prime Minister and Trade Minister Valentine Karbachev who arrived in Amman Friday on a five-day visit to Jordan. King Hussein and Mr. Karbachev stressed the need to enhance Jordanian-Bulgarian cooperation in various fields. The meeting was attended by Supply Minister Mohammed Al Saqqaf and the Bulgarian ambassador to Jordan.

In talks later with Minister of Agriculture Fayed Khasawneh, the Bulgarian deputy premier said arrangements have been made for Bulgarian refrigerated trucks to deliver fresh meat to Jordan and return with shipments of Jordanian tomatoes during the winter.

He added that his country was determined to increase its trade with Jordan.



His Majesty King Hussein Sunday meets Bulgarian Deputy Premier Valentine Karbachev (Petra photo)

## Sharif Zeid visits north

RAMTHA (Petra) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Sunday inspected the northern regions of the country. He visited the border post near the Syrian border and the construction sites along the Amman-Irbid Highway.

Sharif Zeid listened to a briefing by Minister of Public Works and Housing Saad Shrouf on the construction stages of the Al-Jaber border post

near Ramtha and later made a tour of that site.

The prime minister visited the second and third sections of the road linking Amman with Irbid and was briefed on the difficulties that impeded the progress of construction. A series of landslides were largely responsible for the delay, the project was to be completed last year.

## Group reiterates demand to regain control of Arab Orthodox Church affairs

By Rifa Nasrallah

Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Chairman of the Arab Orthodox Society and President of the Orthodox Central Council for Jordan and Palestine Raouf Abu Jaber announced that the Arab Orthodox community was determined to follow in the footsteps of its predecessors in establishing and exercising their rights and protecting their interests despite the present Greek clergy's "hegemony."

At a lecture delivered in Amman, Dr. Abu Jaber reiterated demands made at the conclusion of the Fifth Orthodox Congress held in Amman last December. "We are determined to regain our rights usurped by the Greek clergy that has been abusing the trust, mis-handling Arab Orthodox real estate, neglecting the interests of the Arab Orthodox community and its institutions and controlling the destiny of the Arab Orthodox Church clergy members on the two sides of the River Jordan," said Dr. Abu Jaber.

In his 11-page lecture at the Orthodox Club, Dr. Abu Jaber, presented an expert chronological review of historical events in the Middle East and Jordan since the early Islamic and Byzantine periods.

Providing historical facts about

the Orthodox church which he said was under the control of Arab patriarchs throughout historical eras, Dr. Abu Jaber noted that it was an Arab patriarch who concluded "the famous Omar Pact" with Caliph Omar in Jerusalem in 636 AD, when he handed the caliph the keys to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, thus reaffirming long standing cooperation between Christians and Muslims.

The lecturer said under Ottoman rule, Greece, as well as other European and Arab states, formed one empire, ruled by the Sultan in Constantinople; and it was under the rule of Sultan Mohammad the Second that the Greek clergy were further empowered to handle religious affairs in Palestine for purely political reasons.

The Ottomans thus forced the Greeks to impose their hegemony on Arab Orthodox churches until the late 1890s and the early 20th century when a real awakening started to emerge, with political and religious leaders struggling to throw off both the Ottoman rule and the Greek hegemony over church affairs, according to Dr. Abu Jaber.

What the Arab Orthodox community is demanding, he said, is legitimate and in line with pledges given by the present Patriarch Deodorus of Jerusalem at his inauguration in 1981.

"The Patriarch made pledges which he had not kept, including a promise to halt all selling or leasing of property to the Israelis, improving Arab church's status

spiritually and materially, opening the door for Arab clergy to reach senior church positions, giving due care to Orthodox schools, etc.," noted Dr. Abu Jaber.

He said the Arab Orthodox community continues to demand control of its own affairs because, he said, no Arab priest has been allowed, since the time of the Ottomans, to reach a high position, although the Greeks sometimes resorted to temporary compromise solutions to appease the Arabs.

Dr. Abu Jaber, who presented the Orthodox community's demands to the Fifth Orthodox Congress last December, reiterated to his audience the main objectives of the Arab community:

— seeking to safeguard Arab national rights and Orthodox community estates, similar to endeavours being spearheaded by Roman Catholic Patriarch of Jerusalem Michael Sabbah and the heads of the Protestant chur-

ches;

— halting deals by which Israel was allowed to take hold of lands, like the Orthodox cemetery in Jaffa, the lands around the St. John Monastery, among others;

— giving due attention to the affairs of the churches in Palestine and Jordan, ...many of these estates are in dilapidated condition due to years of neglect, like those in Zababdeh in the West Bank and Madaba church and estates at Taj and Hashimi districts in Amman;

— securing appropriate attention to the Arab Orthodox clergy, offering them the chance to acquire higher standards of learning to assume leading positions in the church;

— ensuring due care to the Orthodox schools which since 1872 have been in poor condition under the Greeks; and

— assuming the leadership of the Patriarchate in Jerusalem.

To date, the Greeks have failed in providing protection to church estates and Arab rights under the occupation, and even refused to involve Arab clergy in the church council activities, Dr. Abu Jaber maintained.

He stressed that the Orthodox community in the two banks is 200,000 strong and can by no means continue to allow Greek clergy to handle their destiny in such a shameful manner.

## Attacker faces trial for attempted murder of child

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A six-year-old girl brutalised by a youth in front of a mosque outside Amman 11 days ago remained in a coma Sunday, and police have rejected the assailant's plea of mental derangement and are planning to try him for attempted murder.

Rana Al Azzeh, the eldest daughter of Mohammad Al Azzeh, was sitting in her father's car along with her four-year-old brother and two-year-old sister outside a mosque in Russeifa on Feb. 12, when the attack occurred, according to family sources.

They were waiting for their father, a Ministry of Education employee, to come out of the mosque after Friday prayers when the assailant, identified as A.T.H., a resident of Wihdat, approached them, said Salameh Al Azzeh, their grandfather.

According to other sources, the assailant, described as a "youth" in police reports, was asked to leave the mosque when he interrupted the sermons which follow Friday prayers. "He was shouting at the preacher and abusing him, and other worshippers threw him out of the mosque," said one source.

The youth came out of the mosque, and "pulled the elder girl and the boy, Murad, out of the car and started beating them and banging their heads against the wall," said the elder Azzeh, quoting eyewitnesses.

The boy collapsed and fell down, and the man kept on banging the girl's head," he told the Jordan Times in a telephone interview from the hospital room where the girl is under intensive care.

A few minutes later the assailant, a car mechanic, left the scene leaving the two victims

bleeding on the ground. He was arrested immediately by police who were alerted by witnesses, the grandfather of the children said.

Both children were immediately admitted to hospital. The boy was released after treatment shortly thereafter. The girl has yet to regain consciousness and her condition remains serious.

Murad was relatively lucky to escape with injuries, but Rana has suffered serious brain damage," said Mr. Azzeh. "Her condition has not changed since she was hospitalised in an unconscious state."

According to local reports, the assailant pleaded to police that "a gene" had urged him to attack the children. The reports said police had discounted this argument — which implies mental derangement leading to the accused being judged not responsible for his behaviour — and that

the assailant would be tried at the Russeifa court.

The charge is expected to be attempted murder.

It was not immediately clear whether the youth had any previous record of similar behaviour, but some members of the Azzeh family said they had inquired about him in Wihdat and were told that he had a history of violence.

There was no explanation to the presence of the youth at a mosque in Russeifa, away from his residence in Wihdat. Azzeh family members said the family of the assailant was from Burin in the occupied West Bank, but that there was no family quarrel which could perhaps explain the attack.

"We don't know the man. We hadn't even heard of him," said the grandfather of the children. "Why did he do such a thing to my children?" he sobbed over the phone.

## HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

### King sends congratulatory cable to Qatari emir

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Sunday sent a cable to the emir of Qatar, Sheikh Khalifa Ben Hamad Al Thani, congratulating him in his name and on behalf of the Jordanian government and people on the anniversary of his accession to the throne. King Hussein wished Sheikh Khalifa continued good health and happiness and the Qatari people further progress and prosperity.

### Crown Prince, Princess Sarvath return to Amman

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath were welcomed home Sunday by His Majesty King Hussein and other dignitaries following their tour of France, Italy and the United Kingdom.

### Ministry to distribute canned food during Ramadan

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Social Development plans to distribute 60,000 cans of food to needy families during the Holy Month of Ramadan, according to Minister Amin Mashaqbeh. Dr. Mashaqbeh said last week the ministry distributed 100,000 cans of vegetables in different regions.

### Jordanian travel agent honoured

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Tourism Sunday honoured a travel agent for his distinguished efforts to promote the tourism industry in Jordan. Mr. Mohammad Hijazi, the director of the Nahas Travel and Tourist Agency, arranged the first trip by group of Japanese tourists to Jordan. A special ceremony was held at the office of Minister of Tourism Yanal Hikmat where Mr. Hijazi was presented with a merit award.

## WHAT'S GOING ON

### EXHIBITIONS

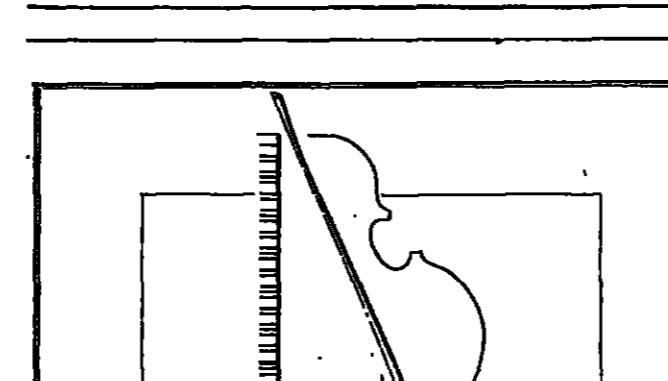
★ Exhibition of paintings by four Arab artists from the United States — Ghada Jamal, Helen Khal, Suha Noursi and Afaf Zurayk — at the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation Gallery in Jabal Amman, between the First and Second Circles (10 a.m. - 6 p.m.)

★ Exhibition of oil paintings by Iraqi artist Mohammad Fakher at Baladina Art Gallery.

★ Exhibition of paintings by Iraqi artists Mohammad Fradi and Jaber Mejbel at Alia Art Gallery.

### FILM

★ French film entitled "La Vie de Famille" at the French Cultural Centre at 8 p.m. (1984, 98 min.).



The National Music Conservatory / Noor Al Hussein Foundation

presents

Aram Zarasian

and

Otail Haddad

in a violin and piano recital

In the programme pieces by:

Vivaldi, Beethoven, Saint-Saens and others

Saturday, 27 February 1993 - 8:30 p.m.

The Royal Cultural Centre - Main Theatre

Tickets for JD 5 each are available at:

- The Royal Cultural Centre, tel. 669036

- Bab Al, tel. 661322

- Rihab Stores, tel. 693775

- Philadelphia Hotel, tel. 663100

- The National Music Conservatory, tel. 687620



the Upper House of Parliament.

The 1973 law provides for licences to be issued to four distinct categories: A journalist who is a member of the Jordan Press Association (JPA), a university graduate, a company dedicated to journalistic activities or a news agency.

Lower House of Parliament Deputy Sulaiman Arar's Al Mustakbal Party was the first to receive a licence, followed by the Al Ahd Party of former Ambassador to the U.S. and Security Chief Abdul Hadi Al Majali.

The Jordan Communist Party of Jacob Zayad and the Jordan Democratic Popular Union Party of Azmi Khawaja have filed applications with the Ministry of Information.

Minister of Information Mahmoud Al Sharif noted that Article 17 of the Political Parties Law entitles every registered political group to have its own publication. But the 1973 Press and Publications Law does not provide for licences based on such a consideration, he pointed out.

Therefore, he told the Jordan Times, "we are using a compromise formula which allows licences to be issued to individuals" pending the finalisation and adoption of the draft press and publications law which is now under debate in

the Upper House of Parliament. "It is up to the applicants to decide what to apply for," he said. "There are no objections to daily newspapers, but no one has so far sought a licence for a daily."

Many journalists and businessmen in the publishing industry believe that the main dissuading factor for seeking licences for dailies is that there is little room for another daily publication in Jordan.

Spokesmen for other parties said they were finalising the submission of applications to the Ministry of Information. There was no clear indication how many of the 16 political parties registered with the Ministry of Interior since Sept. 1 would seek licences for publications.

In the meantime, the Ministry of Information is also open for licences for "specialised" publications, Mr. Sharif said.

The main criteria for such licences, the minister said, were that the publication should be non-political in nature and be dedicated to certain sectors of social and economic life such as fashion, sports, tourism, computers etc.

Although applications for political publications are to be referred to the Council of Ministers, the Ministry of Information is empowered to license "specialised" non-political publications.

## Ministry of Public Works & Housing

### GOVERNMENT TENDERS DIRECTORATE

### Central Tenders Announcement Invitation To Tender No. (14/93)

German Consulting Engineering firms specialised in water systems in association with Jordanian Consulting Engineering firms in the field of water who have been qualified Government Tenders Directorate in field of water class (A or B) and who are interested in participating in this tender are requested to contact the Government Tenders Directorate at the Ministry of Public Works and Housing Amman, Jordan to receive tenders documents starting from 21/2/1993 and in accordance with the following terms:

#### 1. Scope of work:

The Water Authority of the Ministry of Water and Irrigation of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is seeking the services of an experienced and suitably qualified consulting engineering firm to update and modify existing tender documents and to provide leakage detection services, if necessary (stage 1), and to supervise the construction of the rehabilitation of two parts (contracts 1A and 1B) of the water system in the Greater Amman Area (stage 11). The consulting services will be financed by the Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW). Engineering firms from the Federal Republic of Germany may submit proposals for this work. Each selected firm will be required to associate with a Jordanian consultant who has been listed as a company in the fields of water supply and distribution, electrical, and mechanical projects by the Jordanian Engineers Association. The overall level of effort of the Jordanian firm shall be not less than thirty per cent of the professional manmonths.

2. Each tender price JD 100 non-refundable.

3. Last date for purchase of tender documents on March 9, 1993.

4. Offers shall be submitted to the Government Tenders Directorate before 13:30 local time on Tuesday, March 16, 1993.

Chairman, Central Tender Committee

Government Tenders Directorate

Eng. Basheer Al Jagheer



## Alcorum Foundation for Culture & Fine Arts

### Japanese Language Centre

### Non-Profit Organisation

Elite Encounter

Japan - Jordan Cross Culture

Where Kings Road Meets the Root of the Sun

### INVEST IN YOUR FUTURE TO MEET THE 93 CHALLENGES

We have the pleasure to invite you to the Culture of Japan.

Where you can study the philosophy and history of language.



## Jordan made its stand clear — Abu Jaber

(Continued from page 1)

action of the exile terms of the rest. The U.S. secretary of state said the agreement would lead to reviewing the individual cases of the expellees without review applications from them.

A senior U.S. official travelling with Mr. Christopher was Friday quoted as saying that the U.S. would work to get Israel speed up its judicial review process of the evictees, but Israeli officials have declined comment on the U.S. suggestion.

Mr. Abu Jaber said Mr. Christopher called for funding means to

U.S. commitment to the implementation of all U.N. Security Council resolutions on the Gulf war, according to Dr. Abu Jaber.

Jordan also warned of the danger inherent in the spread of nuclear weapons, and pointed to the necessity that Israel sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, Dr. Abu Jaber said.

Pointing out that he held talks with Palestinian and Syrian officials ahead of Mr. Christopher's visit to the Kingdom, Dr. Abu Jaber said he "hoped" the Syrian and Palestinian positions during the visit of Mr. Christopher to the region would be similar to the Jordanian stand, especially on the need to find an acceptable solution to the evictees problem.

## U.S. pledges 'honest broker' role

(Continued from page 1)

called for solving the expellee crisis, Syrian presidential spokesman Jbourian Kourich said.

President Assad affirmed Syria's keen interest in (preserving) the peace process and the necessity of removing the obstacles from the way of the process especially the deportees issue," Mr. Kourich said.

"Agreement was reached to continue contracts between the two parties," he added.

Mr. Kourich said the talks covered a number of bilateral and regional issues. He gave no details.

After meeting King Fahd in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Mr. Christopher will fly to Kuwait and then to Israel. En route, he may stop over in Lebanon on talks with Lebanese leaders, although the country is not on the official itinerary.

Palestinians said Sunday U.S. pressure on Israel to speed up judicial reviews of the evictees would not enable them to defy public opinion and resume the peace talks.

Mr. Christopher said that the United States now plans to be a "full partner" in the peace process by "being active, by being concerned, playing the role of honest broker, playing the role of the facilitator... we intend to, if anything, to be more active than we have in the past."

But he noted that in some of the bilateral talks between Israel and the Arabs, "on a number of issues the parties are close enough together they can be assisted by the facilitation of an outsider."

The Syrians and others have been pressing the Americans to take a more direct involvement in the talks.

"The keenness displayed by Washington towards the peace process needs practical translation on the ground," Syrians Al Thawra daily said in an editorial Sunday.

"This cannot be done unless Washington uses its leverage to persuade Israel to reverse its provocative and stubborn attitude."

Mr. Christopher gave no timeframe for resuming the peace talks in Washington. But U.S. officials have been talking of April as a target date.

Mr. Sharas, who met Mr. Christopher earlier in the day, said at their joint news conference that Damascus wants the peace talks resumed, but also insists on the return of the evictees in accordance with U.N. Security Council Resolution 799.

Mr. Christopher noted that he has sought to defuse "the peace process and other issues" and that there was no trade-off on improving the U.S.-Syrian relations against Syria's backing for resuming the peace talks.

Mr. Christopher said that Mr. Assad "certainly did not indicate that it was necessary for us to discuss or analyse other issues in return for their involvement in the peace process. He has an independent desire to move forward on the process."

Mr. Christopher said that during his session with Mr. Assad at the Syrian leader's palace overlooking Damascus he discussed improving Syria's human rights record and its possible removal from the U.S. State Department's list of countries supporting "terrorism."

This has been a major impediment to bolstering Washington-Damascus relations and resuming badly needed economic aid to Syria.

Mr. Christopher declined to discuss those matters and simply said: "We discussed both subjects."

During his talks with Mr. Christopher Mr. Assad affirmed Syria's commitment to peace and

## Evictees ready for compromise

(Continued from page 1)

"We would have been very happy to see Mr. Christopher come here. We welcome anybody. But we know for sure he doesn't think of the victims," Dr. Dweik told reporters.

The expellees also accused Dr. Christopher Sunday of ignoring them on his Middle East tour and their cause would only die when they are allowed home.

They said they wanted Mr. Christopher to visit their muddy camp facing snow-covered Mount Hermon and the border with Syria, where Mr. Christopher d talks on Sunday.

The exiles said they still supported the Lebanese government's decision to bar everyone, but journalists from visiting the makeshift camp through territory it controls.

overcome obstacles to the peace process so that concentration could be given to the negotiations, saying the U.S. was committed to the principles upon which the peace talks were launched and to which all parties had agreed.

Mr. Christopher said the U.S. had no intentions to encroach on the territorial integrity of Iraq, pointing out that it does not view the conflict with Iraq as a personal conflict, Dr. Abu Jaber said.

Mr. Christopher said the U.S. "has no conflict with the Iraqi people," but emphasised the

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## Garang denies talks planned

(Continued from page 1)

message from (Sudanese head of state Lieutenant-General Omar Hassan) Bashir, that's all."

Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, who once studied with Col. Garang, visited Sudan last week and diplomats here said he had arranged a meeting in Kampala between Col. Garang and Mr. Mohammed to end 10 years of civil war in southern Sudan.

But Col. Garang, who arrived in Kampala Friday, said the only valid mediation was that by Nigeria, which set up two sets of peace talks between the rival Sudanese groups in Abuja last year. Those peace talks stalled in November.

"If the military junta (in Khartoum) wants fresh peace talks they should first tell (Nigerian President Ibrahim) Babangida that his efforts have failed and they want a new mediator," Col. Garang said.

Khartoum has accused Col. Garang of delaying a resumption of the peace talks by refusing to receive a message from Gen. Bashir. Col. Garang in turn has blamed Khartoum for the delays.

One obstacle to a settlement is the internal divisions within the SPLA. Two groups have broken away, accusing Col. Garang of dictatorship and abuse of human rights.

Col. Garang told Reuters he would not try to talk them back. "They have all been bribed by the junta and are now part of the Sudanese government," he said.

The Khartoum government wants all factions to attend peace talks to hammer out an agreement that would be respected by all the rebels now fighting the Sudanese army.

The SPLA is fighting what it sees as domination of the black African south of Sudan by the Arabised and Muslim north. But the movement has been hard hit by the loss of Ethiopian support in 1991 and by successive government offensives.

Col. Garang's forces, which once held a vast area of southern Sudan, have been driven back to a much smaller strip along Sudan's border with Uganda.

The quicker the deportees return the quicker the negotiations can resume."

Mr. Christopher has heard the same view from each of the Arab countries which he has visited since Thursday.

"The street is emotional and not pragmatic," said Palestinian commentator Ziad Abu Zayyad. "They sympathise with the deportees on the human level, if not politically."

Many of the expellees are supporters of groups which have been fighting the Palestine Liberation Organisation for backing the U.S.-sponsored peace talks.

"We cannot go against the will of the people," Mr. Khatib said.

Palestinian leaders have tempered their already flagging enthusiasm for the talks to suit the new public mood since December. Their political embarrassment has been heightened by the Israeli army's iron-fist suppression of protests in the occupied territories. Soldiers have killed nearly 50 Palestinians since Dec. 17.

"As it stands unless there is a big change in human rights conditions I doubt there is a chance for us to go in April," spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi told Reuters.

Israel officials said Israel would resist any U.S. pressure to ease conditions in the occupied territories. But ministers said after Sunday's cabinet meeting that gestures such as prisoner releases and the return of some other long-term evictees were being considered.

Mr. Christopher declined to discuss those matters and simply said: "We discussed both subjects."

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overcome obstacles to the peace process so that concentration could be given to the negotiations, saying the U.S. was committed to the principles upon which the peace talks were launched and to which all parties had agreed.

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## Old enemies try to reassure each other

By Nikos Koundouras

The Associated Press

ATHENS, Greece — As fighting rages in former Yugoslavia, ancient Balkan enemies are trying to reassure one another that they believe war is no way to resolve differences in Europe.

Yugoslavia's southern neighbours have watched with alarm as war in the former communist federation grows bloodier and spreads towards them from Slovenia through Croatia into Bosnia-Herzegovina.

In the last few days, Turkey's President Turgut Ozal has toured Bulgaria and Macedonia and is due to Albania and Croatia. Bulgaria's president Zhelyu Zhelev has visited Albania and Macedonia.

Greece's foreign minister completed an economic cooperation accord with Romania. Germany has asked Greece to use its influence with Serbia to help halt Bosnian bloodshed.

"This is an exchange of information and reassurances which are very useful at this stage," said Kamal Shaeedi of the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies.

While Mr. Shaeedi acknowledged the dangers of a broader Balkan conflict, he said he thought it unlikely.

The main topics of discussion are the possibility of foreign military intervention to end Bosnia's war, the recognition of Macedonia, and the status of Kosovo — all thorny issues that could rekindle ancient hatreds and nationalism.

Despite their minority status in Kosovo, Serbs regard it as the heart of their medieval kingdom and vow never to give it up. Serbian police control the pro-

vince, sometimes clashing with ethnic Albanians. Many observers fear that if the war ends in Bosnia, Serb irregulars will continue their nationalist campaigns in Kosovo through Croatia into Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Turkey, a secular country whose population nevertheless is overwhelmingly Muslim, is outraged at what it sees as world failure to aid Bosnia's Muslims.

It has rallied other Islamic nations to the Bosnian cause and supports military intervention to help Bosnia's Muslim government beat back Serbian fighters who have overrun 70 per cent of Bosnia.

Greece and Romania — Turkey's arch rival and fellow NATO member — oppose foreign intervention.

During his visit to Sofia, Mr. Ozal again said Turkey would supply troops to an international intervention force in Bosnia, but only at U.N. request.

If peaceful methods were fruitless, "the United Nations should give the aggressor a lesson as happened in Kuwait," he said.

There are still those who believe the lessons of a bloody history that gave the Balkans its nickname of "the powder keg of Europe" have been learned.

Thanos Veremis, director of the Hellenic Foundation for Defence and Foreign Policy, a private think tank in Athens, said Turkey is striving to gain influence in the region, especially given most Balkan countries also have Muslim minorities or even majorities.

Mr. Ozal's host, Bulgarian President Zhelyu Zhelev, said

the recent diplomacy amounts to an appeal to the world to stop the "shameful conflict" in Bosnia. He said building alliances in the Balkans was useless.

Alliances certainly did not resolve territorial disputes and ethnic hatreds during the first two Balkan wars, in 1912 and 1913.

Greeks, Bulgars, Serbs, Montenegrins and Albanians all fought to push the Turks out of the Balkans as 500 years of Ottoman domination collapsed.

But then sub-alliances formed and turned on each other to decide who should control Macedonia, and the territory that became Albania.

There are still those who believe the lessons of a bloody history that gave the Balkans its nickname of "the powder keg of Europe" have been learned.

Yet Turkey's recognition of Macedonia is a thorn in the side of the Greeks. Greece fears an independent Macedonia would make territorial claims on a northern Greek province of the same name, and demands the region adopt a new name if it leaves Yugoslavia. Greece has kept the European Community from recognising Macedonia's independence.

And Serbian loathing for the Turks, their former imperial masters, still runs deep.

warning that: "If the tragedy is not stopped, the Balkans will probably have to face much more serious problems."

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Thanos Veremis, director of

# Sports



WBC super lightweight champion Julio Cesar Chavez of Mexico (left) delivers a punch to Greg Haugen of the U.S. The fight was attended by a record 136,000 fans (AFF photo)

## Chavez retains WBC title

MEXICO CITY (R) — Mexican hero Julio Cesar Chavez added to his legend by defeating American Greg Haugen in the fifth round of a fight he dominated from the opening bell before the largest crowd in boxing history.

An estimated 136,000 fans, creaming and waving Mexican flags, packed the open-air Estadio Azteca (Aztec Stadium) to catch their idol retain his World Boxing Council (WBC) super lightweight title.

The Chavez-Haugen fight was one of four championship bouts on the card.

In the first title fight, World Boxing Association super middleweight champion Michael Nunn scored an easy first-round knockout over fellow American "Irish" Danny Morgan.

Azumah Nelson did not have an easy time of it in the second fight against Mexican-born American Gabriel Ruelas. But the wily Nelson managed a majority decision after 12 rounds to retain his WBC super featherweight title.

Terry Norris pummeled Maurice Blocker at will and retained his WBC crown when the fight was stopped early in the second round.

Sur Chavez was clearly the star of the night.

Chavez, 30, gave his fans their money's worth when he knocked down Haugen in the first round.

then kept up a steady barrage of punches until referee Joe Cortez stopped the fight at two minutes, two seconds of the fifth round of their scheduled 12-round bout.

What few punches the beaten and beaten Haugen managed to land under Chavez's onslaught were powerless, merely flies in the face of the champion, who at times dropped his hands to his side, daring the American to hit him.

Chavez gave Haugen and the fans at the stadium and in a world wide pay-per-view audience a lesson in the art of boxing, doubling up on hooks to the body and the head, blocking Haugen's powder-puff and landing straight right hand punches to the face.

Chavez knocked Haugen down on the seat of his trunks with a straight right hand to the head.

The crowd broke the record of 120,757 for the Gene Tunney-Jack Dempsey fight in Philadelphia Sept. 23, 1926.

After a week of bitter verbal exchanges, Chavez refused to shake Haugen's hand before the fight and they glared at each other and exchanged harsh words between rounds.

"It has really been something incredible, something marvelous, I believe that God is with me," Chavez said.

Chavez' record is now 85-0. Haugen, the number one contender coming into the fight, is 32-5.

### SPORTS NEWS IN BRIEF

#### 'Baby Jordan' wins slam dunk contest

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Miami Heat rookie Harold Miner, who has been dubbed "Baby Jordan," won the NBA slam dunk contest Saturday night with one spectacular jam to spare. Though Miner got his moniker after Michael "Air" Jordan while growing up near Los Angeles, he gained notoriety while at Southern Cal for his high-flying, Jordanesque abilities — as well as his shaved head. Jordan hasn't participated in the contest since winning titles in 1987 and 1988. Defending champion Cedric Ceballos of Phoenix rebounded from a missed opening dunk to advance to the championship round. But he also flubbed his first slam of the final and never could catch up.

#### Morceli misses Coghlan's record

BIRMINGHAM (R) — Nouredine Morceli had to settle for the fastest time ever run in Britain after missing out by nearly a second in an assault on the world indoor mile record Saturday. The Algerian world 1,500 metres champion had to race the last five laps alone after British pacemaker Irem Billy had taken him too quickly through the half-way point. Morceli faded over the last lap and clocked 3:50.70, still the third fastest time ever, but some way short of the record 3:49.78 set by Irishman Eamonn Coghlan 10 years ago. American Michael Johnson, an Olympic 200 metres failure, recorded the fastest 400 metres ever seen on a British indoor track and the fourth fastest of all-time, 45.14.

#### Ferrari forced to rethink strategy

ROME (R) — Ferrari look set to abandon plans to introduce their new Formula One car in the middle of the coming season. Proposed rule changes in 1994 will probably force the Italian team to postpone the launch of their 645 model until next year. "We will probably concentrate all our work on the development of the F31A. But we will also start work on the car for 1994," technical director Harvey Postlethwaite told the *Gazzetta dello Sport* in a report published. Ferrari, the most successful team in Formula One history, have not won a Grand Prix for more than two years.

### GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANIAH HIRSCH  
© 1992 Tribune Media Services, Inc.

#### MAKE THE PUNISHMENT FIT THE CRIME

North-South vulnerable. North deals.

**NORTH**  
♦ Q 9 8 3  
8 8 3  
9 7  
♦ K J 6 3  
WEST EAST  
♦ J 10 7 5 ♦ A 6 4 2  
A 7 2 K J 10  
J 8 6 5 2 A  
♦ A ♦ 10 9 5 4 2  
**SOUTH**  
♦ K  
Q 6 5 4  
K 10 4 3  
♦ Q 8 7

The bidding: North East South West

Pass 1 ♦ 1 ♦ Pass

Pass Dbl Pass Pass

Pass

Opening lead: Ace of ♦

The more preemptive value there is in an overall, the weaker you can be for that action. Conversely, to overall a one-club opening bid with one diamond, you must have a good hand — the bid takes away all bidding space from the opponents and gives them an added option — a low-level penalty double at virtually no

risk if you just make your contract, the gain is a mere 70 points.

Had South's long suit been spades, a one-spade overall would have been irreproachable. One diamond served little purpose, especially since with an honor in each suit, South didn't really care what North led should West have declared the contract. As it was, one diamond was passed back to East, who reopened with a double which West converted to penalties.

The defense was merciless. West led the ace of clubs on which East played the deuce — a suit-preference signal for hearts, the lower-ranking side suit. Displaying complete trust in partner, West underlined the ace of hearts to East's king and the jack of hearts was returned and ducked all around.

East reverted to the ten of clubs, a suit preference signal for spades. West ruffed, cashed the ace of hearts and then switched to a spade to East's ace. East gave partner a second club ruff and, when in with the ace of trumps, led another club. East's jack of diamonds now became the third undertrick, and East-West had collected 800 for their efforts.

## Feud blows up between Wimbledon champions

STUTTGART (AP) — Six months ago, Boris Becker and Michael Stich were the perfect picture of a successful tennis partnership, high-fiving each other after winning the Olympic gold medal in doubles.

The trouble began in their victory in Barcelona.

The rivalry between the two Wimbledon champions has evolved into a bitter feud that has thrown the German tennis establishment into disarray.

Stich has accused Becker of breaking promises, Becker has accused Stich and German tennis officials of lying.

German Davis Cup coach Niki Pilic has been caught in between, trying to reconcile his two stars, save his job and satisfy his employer, the German Tennis Federation.

The dispute apparently has been drawing for a long time, but it surfaced when Becker announced in January that he

would not play Davis Cup this year.

Stich reacted by saying Becker had promised him that he would play in 1993 so they could make a joint effort to bring the cup to Germany for the third time.

Becker helped Germany win the cup twice, but Stich was not on those teams.

Stich then said he might play after all if Germany loses against Russia in March and is forced to go into a World Group relegation playoff.

Stich responded by saying he would not play if Becker changes his mind and returns to the team this year.

Media reports — Denied by Becker — said he was asking for as much as 2 million marks (\$1.25 million) to play for the team.

Becker went on a pro offensive.

We appeared on a widely watched sports television show and said: "The player Stich

appears to have a problem with me."

Becker said he could understand Stich's frustration.

"He won Wimbledon, against me, and hardly anyone noticed," he said.

He was exaggerating, but there is no doubt that Becker remains the undisputed darling of the German media and fans.

Becker thought that was appropriate. "I was the first German to win Wimbledon, I was the first one to become No. 1, I was the first in whatever."

"Everybody else after me is second," he said in a recent interview in the news magazine Der Spiegel.

The latest chapter in the saga of hurt egos blew open during this week's Eurocard Open in Stuttgart.

A German newspaper report said Stich had demanded written assurances from the German Tennis Federation that Becker



Michael Stich is caught displaying what he feels

would not play Davis Cup this year.

Stich dismissed the report as "absolute nonsense." German tennis officials denied it. Becker said they were "not saying the truth."

Becker reassured that he had never made a firm promise to play Davis Cup this year. He said he is skipping the Davis Cup to focus his energies on regaining the No. 1 ranking.

### HOROSCOPE

#### FORECAST FOR MONDAY FEBRUARY 22, 1993

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

get one who is fond of you to give you the backing you need to make an undertaking important to you work out right.

**LIBRA:** (September 23 to October 22) Your time is best utilized to your advantage by thinking on what you can best do to increase your reputation as a good citizen in the outside world.

**SCORPIO:** (October 23 to November 21) Many bits of information that can be helpful to your progress are now available to you so use your ability at investigation to obtain them.

**SAGITTARIUS:** (November 22 to December 21) A day when you can combine activity in objectively handling both personal and business interests and avoid persons time-consuming friends.

**CAPRICORN:** (December 22 to January 20) Take note now of the wishes of an associate who is well versed in the activities that mean the most to you and follow the lead of this person.

**AQUARIUS:** (January 21 to February 18) Your productivity level is high now so get into the things that you most want to make more rapidly and efficiently and get them behind you.

**PISCES:** (February 19 to March 20) Focus your time and attention now upon arranging to be with your mate, attachment more and make arrangements also to be with fun companions.

### THE BETTER HALF

By Glasbergen



"Kiss me like you mean it. Pretend you ordered my lips from a fast-food restaurant."

### JUMBLE

IN THAT SCRABBLE WORD GAME  
by Henri Arnold

POLEE

LYRUS

GOBUTH

LEMAFE

SOMETHING IN THE CARDS WHEN THE WIFE IS AWAY.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here: A

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumble: WHINE ROBOT BARREL BELONG

Answer: The thing she knits most easily—HER BROW.

### THE Daily Crossword

by Evelyn Benchoff

ACROSS

1 Thin puff

5 Icelandic

9 Sixty device

13 Relative

15 Urge

16 Algerian seaport

17 La —, Milan

18 Double curve

19 Knowledge

20 Cocktail times

22 Tennis score

23 — days' wonder

24 Barb

25 Chisel

30 Hunter's choice

31 — Ben

32 Adenoh

33 Reverberate

34 Ticktock

35 Minutes, sometimes

36 Diary

42 White heron

43 Plating metal

44 Was in the red

45 Ginkgo

46 Dicaster

47 December

48 Dromedary

49 Lacoste

50 Cigar ending

51 Scoop

52 Gullaw

53 Lachesis

54 Magistrate of Venice

55 Harpier

56 —

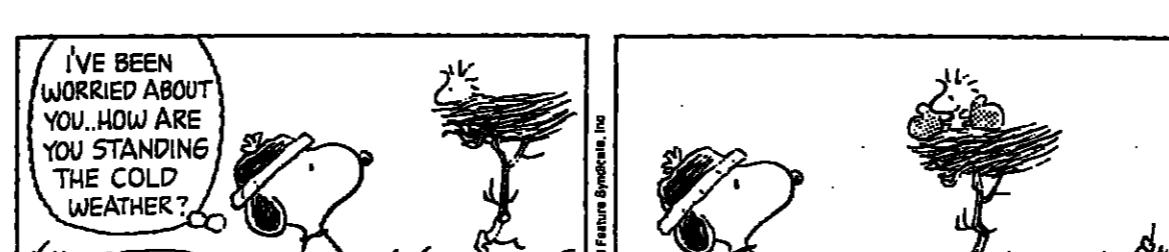
57 Involved with

58 Eros or need

59 Fan pred.

60 Fr. river

61 Fr. river



## Polls: People back Clinton plan

NEW YORK (Agencies) — Most Americans support President Clinton's "share the pain" economic programme, according to three out of four Americans believe their "wealthiest" fellow citizens will still find loopholes to beat high taxes.

A Time magazine-CNN poll found 62 per cent of respondents approve the plan Clinton outlined last week and Newsweek reported 59 per cent of people it surveyed favour congressional approval of his proposal.

A Los Angeles Times survey found 60 per cent approved of his overall plan, and 62 per cent said they're willing to accept the tax increases and spending cuts to improve the nation's economy. Two-thirds said they believed the plan was mostly fair to them, according to the poll published in Sunday's editions.

The Newsweek poll came with more good news for Mr. Clinton: His approval rating is up after a month on the job. Last month, 51 per cent of Americans approved of his handling of the job, while 57 per cent gave Mr. Clinton thumbs up in the new poll.

According to the Time-CNN figures, 76 per cent of Americans believe Mr. Clinton's economic plan means real change and 85 per cent believe it deserves a chance to work.

People also are willing to put their money where their mouths are, with 71 per cent believing they should make sacrifices for Mr. Clinton's plan, the Time-CNN poll found.

The Newsweek poll found

and cutting the government's spending deficits in the longer term.

Despite public opinion polls indicating a majority of average Americans support Clinton's proposals, Mr. Jasinski said his business members had an opposing view.

"Almost uniformly they said it's because the tax increases are greater than the tax cuts," Mr. Jasinski said. "I don't think President Clinton realises that some aspects of this programme actually tax small business more than it gives them a cut."

The House minority whip, Republican representative Newt Gingrich of Georgia, said Saturday the Democrat-dominated Congress should cut its own spending before it approves any tax increases and criticised Mr. Clinton's tax proposals.

On the same programme, a spokesman for the American Petroleum Institute, Charles Dibona, said the proposed tax on energy in Mr. Clinton's package would add 10 cents a gallon to gasoline and so penalise lower-income Americans excessively.

It would cost American corporations more to make their products and potentially induce them to move operations to cheaper-cost locations overseas, especially Mexico.

"So it will reduce employment by about 600,000 people," he added.

On CNN's "Evans and Novak," Senate Finance Committee Chairman Daniel Moynihan was asked whether there was a risk that the slow-paced recovery could be further dampened by Mr. Clinton's proposals.

## Top Japan oil firm loses \$1b on foreign exchange deals

WASHINGTON (R) — The World Bank has put developing countries on alert that it will curtail future lending to badly run, state-owned monopoly power utilities.

The Washington-based institution, in policy papers to be released Monday, said it will also discourage power suppliers from continuing to subsidise energy prices and will move aggressively to encourage private investment in the utilities.

"We don't feel like a sector like energy should be subsidised," Mr. Saunders said.

The World Bank, which serves as the lender of last resort to developing nations, provided more than \$3 billion in energy loans in fiscal 1992, nearly 15 per cent of its overall lending.

But loan activity is declining as the bank focuses on loans to the poorest nations and pushes others to develop self-sustaining power sectors.

Rapidly growing demand had forced countries to consider efficiency measures, partly because of financing constraints.

"Major gains in energy efficiency are essential if energy needs are going to be met," said Richard Stern, director of the World Bank's industry and energy department.

Developing countries add to the problem by charging rates that are lower than the actual costs of producing and distributing power. Industrialised countries recover the full cost and often profit from providing electricity.

Some see this as an opportunity to switch to alternative energy sources. Many nations have yet to tap their domestic natural gas reserves, which have been discovered in 53 developing countries.

"Natural gas is a major focus of World Bank efforts right now," Mr. Saunders said.

Nuclear power plants typically cost too much and rarely emerge as the "least-cost" option, Mr. Saunders said. So far, solar power is not capable of meeting demand in high use areas, officials said. But the World Bank is studying variable speed wind turbines as a possibility.

## World Bank charts new course for energy loans

tries recover the full cost and often profit from providing electricity.

The officials said it could take time to complete the transition but noted some regions have already undertaken reforms and will have an easier time of it than others.

One of the reports, which reviewed energy efficiency and conservation, said the bank would continue to boost lending for projects that improve efficiency and promote fuel substitution that makes economic sense.

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## 'Wise men' advise British government not to raise taxes

LONDON (R) — The British government has received a warning from a team of independent economic forecasters not to raise taxes this year.

He could not confirm a report in leading Tokyo newspapers that the company feared losses on the unauthorised speculation could hinder a long-awaited economic recovery.

"Because the economy is still

fairly delicately balanced we shouldn't interrupt the prospect of recovery by increasing taxes in the March budget," said Andrew Sentance, director of economics at the Confederation of British Industry and a member of the panel.

A report by the forecasters, requested by the government as part of moves to make economic policy more responsive to outside views, was ambiguous on whether interest rates should be cut again.

The government is thought to be considering tax rises in the March budget to help balance its books as recession cuts tax revenues and pushes welfare payments through the roof.

In the report to Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer (Finance Minister) Norman Lamont, the forecasting panel said future tax rises should be put on ice pending "clear evidence of a healthy recovery."

The panel's advice runs counter to warnings last week from the International Monetary Fund

that Britain must raise taxes to curb spending and tackle its budget deficit.

On average the economists expected the economy to meet the treasury's growth forecast of one per cent expansion this year but said there were risks, such as the weak world economy, which could yet injure prospects.

"Our advice to the treasury concentrated very much on how to stimulate the economy," said Andrew Britton, director of the National Institute of Economic and Social Research.

The government is under intense pressure to produce a budget on March 16 that will aid recovery and create jobs after three million in January.

The forecasting panel expects unemployment to rise further this year, with an average forecast of 3.2 million by the end of 1993.

**Jordan Times tel: 667171**

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### FURNISHED APARTMENT FOR RENT

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An international service company would like to hire accountants with the following qualifications:

- University degree graduates in accounting (preferably U.S. graduates).

- 2-5 years of accounting experience.

- Fluent in Arabic and English (spoken & written).

- Working knowledge of computers.

Qualified candidates, please send C.V., photo & credentials NO LATER THAN 28TH OF February to P.O.Box 960913, Amman - attention Human Resources.

## Apple Developer Centre ends first training course

AMMAN — The Apple Developer Centre (ADC) which was recently established in Amman, successfully Thursday concluded its first developer training course. A graduation ceremony was held at the Amman Marriott Hotel and was attended by Dr. Abdulla Al Hamdan, the general manager of Jeraisy Tech (Apple Distributors in Saudi Arabia) and Mr. Jacques Chammam, the general manager of Arab Business Machines (Apple Distributors in the Middle East).

This training course, the first Apple developer training course, carried out the objective of serving the needs of Apple developers in the Middle East by emphasising development issues in the Arabic language. The course was based on the Database development platform (4th Dimension) which is best suited to deal with information systems.

Participating in this training course were 21 developers from five Arab countries. It was the first course of its kind in the Middle East and the first in a sequence of courses which will be carried out by ADC. This course was an introduction to software development on the advanced Apple Macintosh computer. Future courses will also cover advanced development issues on the international level.

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Please call 818780 between 8 a.m.-2 p.m. and 4-7 p.m.

## TODAY AT

### PHILADELPHIA

12/2/1993 19/2/1993

1-Month (%) 1-Year (%) 1-Month (%) 1-Year (%)

U.S. Dollar 3.06 5.62 3.00 3.43

Sterling Pound 6.13 5.63 6.12 5.69

Deutsche Mark 8.50 7.78 8.50 7.20

Swiss Franc 5.50 5.02 5.37 4.93

French Franc 11.87 9.50 11.45 9.50

Japanese Yen 3.18 3.25 3.21 3.18

1-Month (%) 1-Year (%) 1-Month (%) 1-Year (%)

U.S. Dollar 0.6890 0.6910

Sterling Pound 0.9996 1.0046

Deutsche Mark 0.4201 0.4222

Swiss Franc 0.4566 0.4589

French Franc 0.1241 0.1247

Japanese Yen 0.5831 0.5860

Dutch Guilder 0.3732 0.3751

Swedish Krona 0.0912 0.0917

Italian Lira 0.0439 0.0441

Belgian Franc 0.02009 0.02019

### Cinema CONCORD

Tel.: 677420

Kevin Costner and Whitney Houston

#### BODYGUARD

Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 6:00, 8:30, 10:30

Free Car Parking

### Cinema PLAZA

Tel.: 699238

#### Basic Instinct

Starring: Michael Douglas and Sharon Stone

Show: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.

### Nabil & Hisham's AHLAN THEATRE

Tel.: 625155

#### New World Order

Plays continue daily at 9:30 p.m. except Saturdays and Sundays

Happy Fest

12/2/1993 19/2/1993

1-Month (%) 1-Year (%) 1-Month (%) 1-Year (%)

U.S. Dollar 0.6890 0.6910

Sterling Pound 0.9996 1.0046

Deutsche Mark 0.4201 0.4222

Swiss Franc 0.4566 0.4589

French Franc 0.1241 0.1247

Japanese Yen 0.5831 0.5860

Dutch Guilder 0.3732 0.3751

Swedish Krona 0.0912 0.0917

Italian Lira 0.0439 0.0441

Belgian Franc 0.02009 0.02019

## Bosnian Serb forces free blockaded U.N. aid convoy

SARAJEVO (R) — Bosnian Serb forces Sunday freed a U.N. aid convoy trapped at a roadblock in eastern Bosnia and let it head for the besieged Muslim town of Zepa, U.N. peacekeepers said.

But the U.N. aid agency said it was still not able to resume deliveries of food to the civilian population of Sarajevo despite an assurance by Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic that his government was ending a boycott of relief supplies.

The convoy of 10 trucks, loaded with food and medicine, began inching down a winding 12-kilometre mountain road under threat from land mines concealed by fresh snow.

It entered Bosnia Monday, trying to reach either Gorazde or Zepa in a mission frustrated by political maneuvering between rival Muslim and Serb leaders bidding for the sympathy of the outside world.

Tony Land, an official of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Sarajevo, said Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic promised Saturday that an order to let the trucks pass would reach the Serbs at the roadblock.

Land added that city authorities in the Bosnian capital had not authorised the distribution of U.N. aid to the civilian population of 380,000 people who have been trapped since the civil war began 10 months ago.

"We have not been delivering aid into the city," he said. "Right now I am waiting for the city council to make a decision ... as of yesterday the mayor was not available."

Mr. Izetbegovic announced Saturday that the boycott was over after fulfilling its purpose of

drawing attention to the plight of up to 100,000 Muslims starving in eastern Bosnia behind a Serb blockade.

Muslim spokesmen have claimed hundreds of deaths from starvation in towns in the region, some of which have received no outside help since winter began. The toll has not been independently verified.

Bosnian Serbs have refused to let some convoys pass because they say the food strengthens Muslim fighting capability and also because of continuing battles for territory in the east.

The Sarajevo boycott and the Serb blockade of the convoys prompted the UNHCR to suspend aid deliveries last week until U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali ordered their resumption.

U.N. peacekeepers in Sarajevo reacted coolly to a plan by U.S. President Bill Clinton to parachute supplies to eastern Bosnia although it was welcomed by the UNHCR.

Commander Bary Frewer, spokesman for the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) which provides armed escorts for the convoys, said: "We are unenthusiastic about this idea." He suggested persevering with ground missions.

But Commander Land said: "I'd welcome anything that would give food to hungry people."

Since Sarajevo authorities stopped distributing emergency supplies last week, more than 1,000 tonnes of food have piled up at the Tarmac of Sarajevo Airport and another 1,000 tonnes sit in warehouses in the Bosnian capital.

Meanwhile, a prisoner exchange involving 54 Serbs and 54 Bosnians was completed Sunday in Bosnia after a week of negotiations by French and Red Cross officials, the French government announced.

The office of Humanitarian Action Minister Bernard Kouchner said 27 Serbs from Tarcin, southwest of Sarajevo, and 27

which started when Bosnian Serbs resisted independence from Yugoslavia declared by Muslims and Croats.

The Bosnian leader said his troops would fire only if attacked first.

Muslim-controlled Sarajevo Radio reported the freezing city was quiet overnight despite what it described as Serb provocations.

According to the radio, Serb fighters shelled the northern Muslim towns of Gradacac and Maglaj.

The Bosnian Serb News Agency (SRNA) said Muslim forces were still attacking the Serb town of Doboj in northern Bosnia with mortars, despite the ceasefire.

In Croatia, Zagreb Radio said Serb gunners attacked Croatian settlements in the Adriatic coast region which has been volatile since fighting resumed between the two sides last month.

A humanitarian aid convoy of 59 trucks from Strasbourg rested on the Adriatic coast of Croatia Sunday before heading for Sarajevo with or without an armed United Nations escort, organisers said.

The convoy, organised by the French Alsace-Sarajevo Relief Committee, was spending the day at Makarska south of the port of Split prior to beginning the difficult and dangerous leg of the journey to the besieged Bosnian capital.

Meanwhile, a prisoner exchange involving 54 Serbs and 54 Bosnians was completed Sunday in Bosnia after a week of negotiations by French and Red Cross officials, the French government announced.

The office of Humanitarian Action Minister Bernard Kouchner said 27 Serbs from Tarcin, southwest of Sarajevo, and 27

from the central region around Zenica, were freed under the auspices of the French Ambassador to Bosnia, Henry Jacolin. The release took place at Kiseljak, northwest of Sarajevo.

The Bosnian prisoners were freed at a bridge between Sremski Raca in Serbia and Bosanska Raca in eastern Bosnia, the ministry communiqué said.

Mr. Kouchner helped negotiate the exchange during a recent visit to the region. Red Cross, U.N. and European Community representatives also were involved.

In a separate development, police fired tear gas Sunday during a protest by hundreds of Macedonians against the building of houses to settle Muslim refugees from Bosnia's civil war in Skopje.

Classes began Saturday when protesters hurling stones blocked a motorway through the Macedonian capital before being repelled by baton charges and tear gas.

Refugee housing is being built under heavy police protection in the Djorce Petrov district of the city.

Journalists said between 500 and 1,000 demonstrators were confronted Sunday by 200 riot police who stopped an attempt to block the site.

Macedonia, the poorest of the former Yugoslav republics which became independent last year, has received more than 50,000 of the Muslims made homeless by the fighting in Bosnia.

The Movement for All-Macedonian Action (MAAK) said the government's plan to house the refugees was "a policy of further Islamisation of Macedonia."



RUSSIAN MILITARY REFORMS: Two unidentified Russian army officers discuss reforms during a break in the second day of the all-Russian army officers meeting in Moscow on Feb. 21. The talks dealt with the implementation of the military reforms and the level of combat preparedness of the Russian army (AFP photo)

## 497 trapped on drifting North Sea platform

LONDON (Agencies) — Nearly

500 workers were trapped aboard a floating accommodation platform which had cut its anchors and was battered by storms in the North Sea Sunday, rescue services said.

A Royal Air Force (RAF) spokesman said a plan to use helicopters to lift the 497 workers off the vessel, a floating hotel for workers constructing a gas rig, was postponed because of the weather.

A spokesman for the U.S. oil company Amoco, which is building the rig, said no-one had been injured and there was no immediate danger as the platform was holding its position under its own limited power.

The platform cut its anchors overnight when high seas threatened to smash it against the rig Lomond, which is under construction 120 miles east of Aberdeen.

The Amoco spokesman said gas wells had been drilled beneath the Lomond, but they had been completed and there was "no hazard from that aspect."

Prevailing winds were carrying the ship away from the shore, and two life boats and a helicopter were standing by, he said. The six-man crew was in no immediate danger.

Mr. Miedema said rescue services would wait until the storm abated before trying to tow the Linda Buck to the nearest port.

## Coast Guard spokesman Gerrit Miedema said the Swedish flagged freighter North Queen capsized and sank in heavy seas near the small island of Schiermonnikoog.

Three lifeboats from the Dutch and German rescue services were on the spot before the leaking grain carrier overturned and the nine-man crew were winched to safety by a German naval helicopter.

The Golden Globe Award is often considered a barometer of how the Academy Award voting will run. Among the Hollywood celebrities who came to honour Pacino were co-star Ellen Barkin and Chris O'Donnell and Hollywood heavy-hitters Christopher Reeve, Lauren Bacall, Spike Lee, director Sidney Lumet and special agent Michael Ortiz.

## Stars pay tribute to Al Pacino

NEW YORK (R) — Oscar Nominee Al Pacino, hoping to break his Academy Award losing streak, got a chance to court the voters in a star-filled tribute to the actor. Pacino, famous for his often eruptive roles, is nominated this year as best actor for his portrayal of a blind man in *Scant Of A Woman* and Best Supporting Actor for his role of a smooth salesman in *Glengarry Glen Ross*. But he was honoured at the gala Saturday for the depth of his career, which includes such films as the Godfather trilogy, *Serpico* (1973) and *Dog Day Afternoon* (1975). "There is no one who can combine the intensity and power of Al Pacino with his sympathy and vulnerability," *Glengarry* co-star Alec Baldwin told the crowd of 700 at the black-tie dinner at New York's Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. While Pacino's films have earned him six previous Academy Award nominations, he has never won the Oscar. This year, he has already won the Golden Globe Award for *Scant Of A Woman*. The Golden Globe Awards are often considered a barometer of how the Academy Award voting will run. Among the Hollywood celebrities who came to honour Pacino were co-star Ellen Barkin and Chris O'Donnell and Hollywood heavy-hitters Christopher Reeve, Lauren Bacall, Spike Lee, director Sidney Lumet and special agent Michael Ortiz.

## Pollution controllers lose their hair

MANILA (R) — For air pollution in the southern Philippines, read hair pollution. Of 20 pollution control inspectors measuring smoke emissions from cars and trucks in Davao City, all found their hairlines suddenly starting to recede, and some went completely bald, the Manila Times said Sunday. It quoted Jose Guinatocan, officer-in-charge of the city's environment office, as saying inspectors from now on would be assigned to air testing to prevent further hair loss.

## British men often violent at home — SURVEY

LONDON (R) — Two out of three British men would react violently if their wives or girlfriends were unfaithful or argued about domestic arrangements, according to a survey on domestic violence. They survey, by the Centre of Criminology at Middlesex University, found that British men lose their fanned "stiff upper lip" at home, resorting to frequent violence. Sixty-three per cent of men questioned said they would respond violently if they found out their partners had been unfaithful or in a particularly intense fight about children, money or other domestic arrangements. Almost three out of 10 women surveyed said they had been injured by their partners. Six per cent said they had been forced to have sex in the past year and 2.4 per cent said they had been raped at home. Of those who said their partners had attacked them, 29 per cent had to see a doctor. More than four in 10 had difficulty sleeping or felt depressed. But few women had reported the attacks to police — only one in five, the survey showed. The same proportion went to a doctor and 21 per cent went straight to a lawyer. Project director Jayne Mooney, who interviewed 580 women and 420 men, said the survey had uncovered a "high level of domestic violence."

## World's oldest citizen turns 118 in France

ARLES, France (R) — Jeanne Calment, believed to be the world's oldest citizen, was showered with bouquets and telegrams when she turned 118 Sunday in an old people's home in Arles, southern France. Ms. Calment, who knew the painter Vincent Van Gogh in her youth, gave up smoking last year and no longer drinks her daily glass of port. She is deaf but her memory is still vivid. In an interview with France-Info Radio, she said: "The past is very long, so long that it's hard to remember everything." Recalling Van Gogh, who lived in Arles in 1888-89 when he cut off part of his ear and sent it to a woman who had spurned his love, Ms. Calment said: "He was crazy. He had the character of a madman." She also says she remembers the funeral of French literary giant Victor Hugo, who died in Paris in 1885. The Guinness Book of Records lists her as the world's oldest living person.

## ANC accuses De Klerk of playing games

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — The ANC Sunday scoffed at President F.W. De Klerk's appointment of the first non-white cabinet ministers, saying it reeked of tokenism and did nothing to further black-white relations.

"The fact that they begin duties on April Fool's Day speaks for itself," the black group said in its first official response to Saturday night's cabinet changes.

Mr. De Klerk, seeking to attract new supporters to his National Party in advance of multiracial elections, named an Indian and two mixed-race men to cabinet posts, making them the first non-whites to hold portfolios. But they were given low-profile positions, and Mr. De Klerk did not appoint a black cabinet minister.

Abe Williams, a member of parliament's Mixed Race Chamber, was named minister of sport; Jac Rabic, another mixed race politician, was appointed minister of population development, and Indian lawyer Baadra Ranchod was named minister of tourism.

None is known as an anti-apartheid activist, and all have been criticised within their ethnic groups in the past for working with the white-led government.

Calling the three "ANC'd" the ANC said Mr. De Klerk's move was an "empty gesture" that demonstrated the need for multiracial elections to choose a new government.

"Reconciliation means all the people of South Africa electing a government of their choice, drawn from all the people of this country. It does not mean De Klerk playing tokenism population games," the nation's most powerful black group said.

Indian college students burned Mr. Ranchod in effigy in 1986 when he became South Africa's first non-white ambassador, to the European Community in Brussels.

Anti-apartheid activists assailed Mr. Rabic and Mr. Williams for joining parliament in 1984, when separate chambers were created for Indians and people of mixed race. The chambers are far weaker than the white chamber, and the black majority was ignored.

Their participation in the segregated parliament made them part of the apartheid system, the ANC and other groups charged.

Despite the angry response from the ANC, the appointments were not likely to affect the progress of ANC-government talks on political reform. Both sides are closer than ever on their plans for an interim government to oversee the transition to multiracial democracy, and negotiations to work out final details are expected to resume next month.

## U.N. reports fresh fighting in Cambodia

PHNOM PENH (R) — United Nations peacekeepers have reported fresh fighting between Phnom Penh government troops and Khmer Rouge guerrillas in Cambodia's central Kompong Thom province, a senior military official said Sunday.

"There's definitely fighting going on between CAF (Phnom Penh) and NADK (Khmer Rouge) just north of Stung," said the U.N. military official told Reuters.

The Khmer Rouge strength was estimated at about 30-40 guerrilla fighters, he said. Their weapons include a wheeled 107mm Chinese-made rocket launcher.

No injuries have been reported among any of the personnel stationed there as part of the 22,000-strong U.N. Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC).

UNTAC was set up after a peace agreement was signed in Paris in 1991 by all four rival Cambodian political factions, including the Khmer Rouge.

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The Khmer Rouge refuses to cooperate with UNTAC or implement the terms of the Paris pact.

Some locals are getting out. They believe it (Stung) will be attacked," he said.

The official, who asked not to be named, said the Khmer Rouge had fired several 107mm rockets that landed within 500 metres of an Indonesian paratroop encampment in town.

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